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ABSTRACT

This paper lists the language arts skills that are developed in elementary school children, including sentence writing, punctuation, capitalization, reference, poetry, listening, conversation, spelling, and handwriting. The degree to which children are introduced to these language arts skills depends on their grade level and capabilities, as well as what skills the teacher, department, and school system consider important. Performance objectives for each skill are appended. (RL)

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THE ROLE OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN PREPARING CHILDREN
FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL COMPOSITION SKILLS

A Paper Presented to
The National Council of Teachers of English
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November 24-26, 1977

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As children enter elementary school, they bring with them a surprising large oral and listening vocabulary, and an uncanny ability to communicate their ideas effectively, although somewhat limited. They have acquired their oral language competencies without formal instruction and are capable of learning and using language quite effectively.

As teachers, we accept these children into formal education and begin a process of remolding and remodeling. We begin fitting them into a prescribed language series, or as teachers, those skills that we feel are necessary for them to learn. Granted, a child's preschool accomplishments, including varied forms of oral expression are effective enough in talking with their peers and will need some refinement or replacement, but this does not mandate starting every child from square one.

There is an extremely important facet in this remolding process and that is the role of the teachers. Teachers must find ways to build upon a child's strengths while maintaining his/her joy of language and learning. A child's imagination and enthusiasm should be maintained.

Language should be centered where children are motivated to communicate their feelings and thoughts to

one another. The answer does not come from placing a language book in front of a child and then breaking language skills up into fragments for them to digest piece by piece. Rather, let the child feel language, live language, speak language, and write it in as many ways as possible.

The purposes of this presentation are to show what language arts skills are necessary for the elementary school child and the vital role that a teacher must maintain in the accomplishment of these skills.

In a careful language arts program at the elementary level, careful step by step development of written skills, parallels attention to speaking skills. What is said by a child is of primary importance, because if a child can speak correctly, he/she should be able to develop those skills necessary to write correctly.

Those skills that should be included in a balanced language arts program at the elementary school level include: sentence skills, punctuation skills, capitalization skills, letter writing skills, parts of speech, correct language usage skills, reference skills, poetry skills, listening skills, conversational skills, spelling skills and handwriting skills.

In connection with this portion of the program, each of you has been given a handout of those skills necessary for a successful elementary school language arts program. These skills are by no means in any

prescribed sequence, as no two children will learn in the same way, and no two teachers will view the importance of these language arts skills in the same way. These language arts skills represent a basic foundation necessary for elementary school children in preparing them for composition skills necessary for junior and senior high school.

The degree to which children are introduced to these language arts skills will depend upon three major factors: first, the grade level and capabilities of the children involved; secondly, those language arts skills viewed as being important by the teacher; and thirdly, those language arts skills deemed necessary by a particular department or school system.

Regardless of a child's level, all children read and write, talk or listen throughout a school day. Therefore, language arts skills are used constantly. All subject areas require the application of some of these skills.

Basically, at the kindergarten level, the children are learning to communicate with one another. Their entire year is based upon social development. In order to interact with their peers, they must have some proficiency with their communication skills. It must also be remembered that these children have been communicating with people prior to their entrance into school. They have also been listening to people around them and are

quite capable of deciding what is important for them to listen to. Therefore, it is up to the teacher to build upon what these children already know.

During the first and second years of elementary school, children have begun their formal reading process. They are able to communicate their thoughts more readily than at the kindergarten level. They are also able to reproduce simple conversations into written exercises. Children are more capable of accepting and learning a greater amount of language arts skills during these years.

Children at the third and fourth levels should have achieved competencies in several language arts skills. At this age, the children can listen, speak, read and write to one another without the direct aid of the teacher. These years become very thought provoking for the children, and can be made more challenging by an effective teacher. Language skills must be placed very carefully upon the foundation that has been laid in the previous years.

The two final years of elementary school combine all previous years learning of language arts skills. The children should have a general knowledge of those skills listed in the accompanied handout. These children as they prepare themselves for junior high school should have a knowledgeable foundation of all basic language arts skills. They should be able to communicate effectively and be able to write as effectively as they speak.

Throughout these elementary years, teachers are able to discover weaknesses in various language arts skills through the help of other subject areas. Whenever a weakness occurs, it should be tended to during the language period. The connection between language arts and other subject areas should be a two way street and in proper perspective, this can lead to a worthwhile experience. Since children are involved in many subject areas, this becomes an important factor in the teaching of an effective language arts program.

Throughout this discussion of language arts skills necessary throughout the elementary years, I have repeatedly mentioned the term "effective teacher." The teacher is the key factor in the development of a viable child's language arts program. A language book provides basic guidelines to be followed and a school system or department provides goals to be attained; however, the teacher remains the principle innovator in a balanced language arts program.

The role of an effective teacher in a balanced language arts program should be one of assisting all the children at a level appropriate to their ability and age. All children should be treated as individuals and language skills should be introduced by the total involvement of both child and teacher. Through the areas of discussion, reading and observation, an effective teacher should be able to extend and build upon a child's

ideas and give each one the opportunity to organize and express their ideas in speaking as well as in writing.

Being able to acquire a beginning knowledge of simple language arts skills should be the prime objective to which children as well as teachers should direct themselves in. Children should be well prepared for junior high school composition skills if they are able to master those skills listed in the accompanied handout. Most teachers can be effective teachers if they can remember two basic goals - to maintain a joy of learning, and secondly, to bring with them as much knowledge, enthusiasm and imagination as their children.

LANGUAGE ARTS SKILLS NECESSARY FOR THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILD

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September 1977

The purpose of this paper is to show what Language Arts skills are necessary for the elementary school child. Those skills included are sentence skills, punctuation skills, capitalization skills, letter writing skills, parts of speech, correct language usage skills, reference skills, poetry skills listening skills, conversational skills, spelling skills and handwriting skills.

SENTENCE SKILLS

1. To know that a sentence is a complete thought.
2. To know that a sentence can tell.
3. To know that a sentence can ask.
4. To know how to make sentences into complete thoughts.
5. To know that sentences give orders or directions.
6. To know that sentences show strong feeling.
7. To know how to write a sentence.
8. To know that a sentence begins with a capital letter.
9. To know that sentences end with punctuation marks.
10. To know that a telling sentence ends with a period.
11. To know that an asking sentence ends with a question mark.
12. To know that other punctuation is used for other types of sentences.
13. To know how to write a telling sentence.
14. To know how to write an asking sentence.
15. To know how to write other types of sentences.
16. To know how to recognize a telling sentence.
17. To know how to recognize an asking sentence.
18. To know how to recognize other types of sentences.
19. To know how to write interesting, original and correct sentences.
20. To know how to change a declarative sentence into a question.
21. To know how to arrange sentences to get better meaning.
22. To know how to eliminate "run-on" sentences.
23. To know how to combine short sentences into one good one.
24. To know how to write a simple sentence, N-V.

25. To know how to write sentences using N-V-N.
26. To know how to write a sentence using the basic pattern N-LV-N.
27. To know how to write a sentence using the basic pattern N-LV-Adj.
28. To know how to modify the predicates of sentences by adding words, phrases and clauses.
29. To know how to write varied sentences according to form: simple, complex, compound, compound-complex.
30. To know how to extend basic sentence patterns by compounding, subordination, modification and apposition.
31. To know how to write clearly on a selected topic.
32. To know how to write a good topic sentence.
33. To know how to recognize a paragraph.
34. To know that the first line of a paragraph is indented.
35. To know how to write a paragraph in good order.
36. To know how to write sentences correctly in a paragraph.
37. To know how to organize and summarize.
38. To know how to prepare and write a report.
39. To know how to write a story or report using declarative, exclamatory, interrogative and imperative sentences.
40. To know how to write stories using satire, personification, alliteration, and onomatopoeia and other figures of speech.
41. To have the opportunity to write paragraphs, stories, reports, and to write creatively.
42. To know how to recognize stories, reports and creative writings.

PUNCTUATION SKILLS

1. To know that punctuation marks are used in the English language.
2. To know that a period closes a telling sentence.
3. To know that a question mark closes an asking sentence.
4. To know that a period or exclamation mark closes a command.

5. To know that a period is used after numerals and Roman Numerals.
6. To know that a period is used after an initial.
7. To know that a period is used after a title of respect
8. To know that a period is used after an abbreviation.
9. To know that commas are used in lists.
10. To know that a comma goes between the day of the month and year.
11. To know that a comma is used after the salutation of a letter.
12. To know that a comma is used after the closing of a friendly letter, business letter or note.
13. To know that a comma is used to set off an appositive.
14. To know that commas are used to indicate changed word order.
15. To know how to use a comma in a sentence to aid in making meanings clear.
16. To know that a comma is used for transitional and parenthetical expressions.
17. To know the reason for using an apostrophe in a contraction.
18. To know that an apostrophe is used in common contractions.
19. To know that an apostrophe is used to show possession.
20. To know that a colon is used after the salutation of a business letter.
21. To know that a colon is used in writing time.
22. To know that a colon is used to set off a list.
23. To know that quotation marks are used before and after a direct quote.
24. To know that quotation marks are used for titles, chapters of books, titles of poems or stories and special names.
25. To know that a hyphen is used to separate parts of a word divided at the end of a line.
26. To know that a hyphen is used in compound numbers.
27. To know to underline the title of a book.

CAPITALIZATION SKILLS

1. To know the difference in lower case and capital letters.
2. To know to use a capital letter to begin a sentence.
3. To know to capitilize the word I.
4. To know to use capital letters for first and last names.
5. To know that a capital letter is used to write the date and common holidays.
6. To know that a capital letter is used in writing titles of respect.
7. To know that capital letters are used in writing proper nouns.
8. To know that capital letters are used when writing the names of towns and streets.
9. To know that a capital letter is used in writing the name of an organization or building.
10. To know that a capital letter is used for the first word of a salutation and the first word of a closing in a letter.
11. To know that a capital letter is used when writing the first and important words of titles and books.
12. To know that a capital letter is used when writing the names of states and countries.
13. To know that a capital letter is used for names of geographical places.
14. To know that Mother and Father are to be capitalized when used in place of the name.
15. To know that capital letters are used in outlines.
16. To know that the first word of a quoted sentence is capitalized.
17. To know that a capital letter is used when writing the names of the Diety and the Bible.
18. To know to capitalize the first word in a line or verse.
19. To know to capitalize commercial trade names.
20. To know to use capital letters for abbreviations of proper nouns and titles.
21. To know to use capital letters for proper adjectives referring to nationality or race.

LETTER WRITING SKILLS

1. To know how to write a note.
2. To know how to recognize a note.
3. To know how to write an invitation.
4. To know how to recognize an invitation.
5. To know how to write a thank you.
6. To know how to recognize a thank you.
7. To know how to write a friendly letter.
8. To know how to recognize a friendly letter.
9. To know how to write a business letter.
10. To know how to recognize a business letter.
11. To know how to write a letter of appreciation.
12. To know how to recognize a letter of appreciation.
13. To know how to write an announcement.
14. To know how to recognize an announcement.
15. To know how to write a friendly or business letter with one or two good paragraphs.
16. To know the five basic parts of a friendly or business letter.
17. To know how to recognize the five basic parts of a friendly or business letter.
18. To know how to write an address.
19. To know how to write a return address.
20. To know how to address an envelope.
21. To know the proper punctuation found within a letter.
22. To know the proper capitalization skills necessary for good letter writing.
23. To know how to fill out application forms.
24. To know how to order from a business.
25. To know how to register a complaint in writing.

PARTS OF SPEECH

1. To know that nouns name people, places and things.
2. To know that verbs tell action is, has or will take place.
3. To know how to use correct possessive pronouns: my, mine his, hers, theirs and ours.
4. To know the function of naming, describing and acting words.
5. To know how to substitute nouns for other nouns.
6. To know how to substitute verbs for other verbs.
7. To know the function of a noun, verb, adjective and adverb.
8. To know the function of a conjunction, preposition and interjection.
9. To know how a noun can show possession.
10. To know common and proper nouns.
11. To know singular and plural nouns.
12. To know the possessive forms of nouns.
13. To know how to recognize a noun.
14. To know helping verbs.
15. To know the verbs of being.
16. To know verbs in contractions.
17. To know how verbs tell time.
18. To know the principal parts of verbs.
19. To know how to select verbs in composition.
20. To know that subject and verb should be in agreement.
21. To know how to recognize a verb.
22. To know singular and plural pronouns.
23. To know possessive pronouns.
24. To know how to use pronouns as subjects.
25. To know how to use pronouns after action verbs.

26. To know how to use pronouns after prepositions.
27. To know how to recognize a pronoun.
28. To know how to recognize an adjective.
29. To know how to use an adjective correctly.
30. To know how to make comparisons with adjectives.
31. To know the position of adjectives.
32. To know how to recognize an adverb.
33. To know how to make comparisons with adverbs.
34. To know the correct degrees of adjectives and adverbs.
35. To know how to recognize a preposition.
36. To know how to use the correct preposition.
37. To know how to recognize a preposition.
38. To know how to use the correct conjunction.
39. To know how to recognize a conjunction.
40. To know how to use an interjection correctly.
41. To know how to recognize an interjection.

CORRECT LANGUAGE USAGE

1. To know the correct usage of is-are.
2. To know the correct usage of is-is not.
3. To know the correct usage of is not-are not.
4. To know the correct usage of am-am not.
5. To know the correct usage of I-me.
6. To know the correct usage of we-us.
7. To know the correct usage of did-done.
8. To know the correct usage of saw-seen.
9. To know the correct usage of came-come.

10. To know the correct usage of went-gone.
11. To know the correct usage of know-knew.
12. To know the correct usage of draw-drew.
13. To know the correct usage of throw-threw.
14. To know the correct usage of blow-blew.
15. To know the correct usage of brought-took.
16. To know the correct usage of hear-here.
17. To know the correct usage of to-too-two.
18. To know the correct usage of are-our.
19. To know the correct usage of there-their.
20. To know the correct usage of ran-run.
21. To know the correct usage of isn't any-aren't any.
22. To know the correct usage of ran-run.
23. To know the correct usage of lie-lay.
24. To know the correct usage of himself-themselves.
25. To know the correct usage of let-leave.
26. To know the correct usage of a-an.
27. To know the correct usage of sit-sat-set.
28. To know the correct usage of teach-learn.
29. To know the correct usage of good-well.
30. To know the correct usage of could-have.
31. To know the correct usage of said-says-say.
32. To know the correct usage of took-taken.
33. To know the correct usage of ate-eaten.
34. To know the correct usage of began-begun.
35. To know the correct usage of gave-given.
36. To know the correct usage of am-is-are-was-were.

37. To know the correct usage of sang-sung.
38. To know the correct usage of rang-rung.
39. To know the correct usage of broke-broken.
40. To know the correct usage of drew-drawn.
41. To know the correct usage of drank-drunk.
42. To know the correct usage of them-those.
43. To know the correct usage of this-that.
44. To know the correct usage of easy-easily.
45. To know the correct usage of could-have.
46. To know the correct usage of wrote-written.
47. To know the correct usage of any-no.
48. To know the correct usage of take-took-taken.
49. To know the correct usage of who-whom.
50. To know the correct usage of then-than.

REFERENCE SKILLS

1. To know the names of the letters of the alphabet.
2. To know alphabetical order.
3. To know how to locate letters in relation to one another.
4. To know the correct uses of a dictionary.
5. To know how to obtain specific information in a dictionary or encyclopedia.
6. To know how to use guide words.
7. To know what words are listed by root words in a dictionary.
8. To know how to use an index and table of contents.
9. To know how to select the right meaning.
10. To know how a dictionary helps in spelling and pronunciation.

11. To know how to respell to help in pronunciation.
12. To know how to use topical headings in a book.
13. To know what homonyms are.
14. To know what antonyms are.
15. To know what synonyms are.
16. To know how to use a dictionary for the correct uses of finding homonyms, antonyms, and synonyms.
17. To know how to divide words correctly.
18. To know how to discover new word meanings.
19. To know how to use the dictionary to determine the part of speech.
20. To know how to study a dictionary page.
21. To know how to use guide words.
22. To know how symbols are used in a dictionary.
23. To know how to use prefixes and suffixes.
24. To know how to study parts of words.
25. To know how to keep good records.
26. To know how our language grew.
27. To know how to organize for study.
28. To know how to use a bibliography.
29. To know how to use the library.
30. To know how to use a card catalog.
31. To know how to use a telephone directory.
32. To know the difference between denotation and connotation.
33. To know how to critically evaluate an article.
34. To know how to use an atlas.
35. To know how to use a thesaurus.
36. To know how to use an encyclopedia.

POETRY SKILLS

1. To have the opportunity to hear poetry read frequently.
2. To have the opportunity to read poetry.
3. To have the opportunity to write poetry.
4. To appreciate and enjoy poetry.
5. To know what a couplet is.
6. To know how to recognize a couplet.
7. To know how to write a couplet.
8. To know what a triplet is.
9. To know how to recognize a triplet.
10. To know how to write a triplet.
11. To know what free verse is.
12. To know how to recognize free verse.
13. To know how to write free verse.
14. To know what a quatrain is.
15. To know how to recognize a quatrain.
16. To know how to write a quatrain.
17. To know what a limerick is.
18. To know how to recognize a limerick.
19. To know how to write a limerick.
20. To know what Haiku is.
21. To know how to recognize Haiku.
22. To know how to write Haiku.
23. To know what a ballad is.
24. To know and engage in choral reading or speaking.
25. To know the mood of a poem.
26. To know the meaning of a poem.

27. To know how to find humor in a poem.
28. To know how to read poetry aloud.
29. To know how to listen to poetry.
30. To know how to find patterns of rhythm and rhyme.
31. To know how to enjoy the music of poetry.
32. To know words that repeat the same sound.
33. To know how to read thought groups.
34. To know how to read poetry clearly.

LISTENING SKILLS

1. To know how to listen to sounds.
2. To know how to listen to stories.
3. To know how to listen politely.
4. To know how to listen to simple and complex directions.
5. To know how to follow directions after listening.
6. To know how to listen to a report.
7. To know how to listen to announcements.
8. To know and remember what is heard.
9. To know how to relay a message accurately.
10. To know how to learn new words by listening.
11. To know how to listen for pleasure.
12. To know how to listen for words that rhyme.
13. To know how to listen to a poem.
14. To know how to listen for information.
15. To know how to listen to a conversation.
16. To know how to listen in a discussion.

17. To know how to listen for main ideas.
18. To know how to listen for sequence of events or ideas.
19. To know how to listen for inferred ideas or meanings.
20. To know how to listen for beginning sounds.
21. To know how to listen for ending sounds.
22. To know how to listen for long and short vowel sounds.
23. To know how to listen for consonant clusters.
24. To know how to listen for prefixes and suffixes.
25. To know how to listen for present and past tense.
26. To know how to listen for parts of words.
27. To know how to sense moods in listening.
28. To know how to listen to a telephone conversation.
29. To know how to listen for important details.
30. To know how to draw a conclusion after listening.
31. To know how to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant ideas.
32. To know how to take notes while listening.
33. To know how to anticipate what is coming next.
34. To know how to select worthwhile listening activities.
35. To know that all people speak in different ways.

CONVERSATIONAL SKILLS

1. To know how to speak in complete thoughts.
2. To know how to speak clearly and correctly.
3. To know how to greet people.
4. To know how to introduce people.
5. To know that self is named last.
6. To know how to carry on a discussion.

7. To know how to take part in a discussion.
8. To know how to take part in a round table discussion.
9. To know how to start a conversation.
10. To know how to take part in a conversation.
11. To know proper courtesy when speaking.
12. To know how to give messages.
13. To know how to speak on the telephone.
14. To know how to speak in front of the class.
15. To know how to tell a story.
16. To know how to give an oral report.
17. To know how to describe a sound, feeling or situation.
18. To know how to make a simple apology.
19. To know how to express ideas clearly.
20. To know how to use a variety of descriptive words.
21. To know how to speak with expression.
22. To know how to give an organized talk.
23. To know how to give accurate directions.
24. To know how to conduct a class or meeting.
25. To know how to interview a person.
26. To know how to learn new vocabulary words.
27. To know how to memorize a variety of materials.
28. To know how to speak in sequence.
29. To know how to speak naturally.
30. To know how to speak effectively.

SPELLING SKILLS

1. To know how to recognize letters of the alphabet.

2. To know how to write letters of the alphabet.
3. To know how to write one's name.
4. To know how to identify single consonant sounds and consonant blends.
5. To know how to identify long and short vowel sounds.
6. To know how to hear and see similarities in words.
7. To know how to copy a sentence or paragraph correctly.
8. To know how to write a simple sentence with correctly spelled words.
9. To know how to see and hear parts of words.
10. To know how to recognize compound words.
11. To know how to recognize homonyms.
12. To know how to recognize and list synonyms.
13. To know how to recognize and list antonyms.
14. To know how to put words in alphabetical order.
15. To know how to study words.
16. To know that some words have more than one spelling.
17. To know that some words have more than one meaning.
18. To know how to use phonetic aids.
19. To know how to identify syllables.
20. To know how to use the dictionary as a spelling aid.
21. To know how to use the dictionary as a pronunciation guide.
22. To know the four combinations of words: root by itself, prefix plus root, root plus suffix, and prefix plus root plus suffix.

HANDWRITING SKILLS

1. To know how to turn in a neat paper.
2. To know how to use pencil or pen correctly and neatly.

3. To know how to write standard numerals 0-9.
4. To know how to write Roman Numerals.
5. To know the difference between lower case letters and capital letters.
6. To know how to write one's name and address.
7. To know about left and right margins.
8. To know about top and bottom margins.
9. To know how to center a title.
10. To know how to use proper punctuation.
11. To know how to label pictures.
12. To know how to write in manuscript.
13. To know how to write in cursive.
14. To know how to recognize manuscript.
15. To know how to recognize cursive.
16. To know how to space between letters, words and numbers.
17. To know how to avoid crowding.
18. To know how to write with reasonable speed.
19. To know how to write on a chalkboard.
20. To know how to write on a paper without lines.
21. To develop a legible style of handwriting in manuscript and cursive.